



Riverside General Plan Program

Social Services Meeting Tuesday, June 10, 2003

On Tuesday, June 10, 2003, City of Riverside Planning staff and the General Plan consultant team, led by Cotton/Bridges/Associates and MIG, held a Social Services Topic Meeting. The meeting provided an opportunity to give representatives from key public and non-profit organizations to provide input on community and organizational needs and programs and actions that the General Plan should include. Attendees included:

Pamela Anderson, American Red Cross
Kimberly Wilder & Paul Van Dorn, Community Access Center
Catherine Cooney, Community Foundation
Rose Mayes, Fair Housing Council
Dom Betro, Family Service Association of Western Riverside County
Kim Davidson-Morgan, Riverside Land Conservancy
Charlotte Fox, Nonprofit Network of Southwest County & League of Women Voters
Ned Cooney, Resource Center for Nonprofit Management
Jerry Corrales, Visiting Nurse Association

Social service groups were provided an overview of the General Plan Program and were provided a summary of the community visioning process conducted to-date.

Social service organizations and stakeholders were asked to identify how to best pursue the City's vision in the context of the following vision themes:

- A. How we work
- B. How we play
- C. How we live
- D. How we get around
- E. How we learn

The comments of the attendees are provided on the following pages.

How We Work

The City has not viewed non-profits as a partner when seeking solutions. However, there are over 200 non-profits in the City that provide services in the Riverside. Lately we have had a better dialogue with the City.

The City expends \$550,000 a year on service programs. Non-profits provide \$216 million annually in service programs. (estimates)

We are lacking adequate sites and programs to provide social services.

We need to create long-lasting partnerships with the City. Sometimes partnerships only last two to three years. We need long-term commitments in order to leverage funds.

We need to identify locations for community facilities in these areas:

- Arlanza
- Eastside
- Casablanca
- Downtown— (homeless facilities for those in Fairmont Park)

Non-profits employ a lot of individuals in the City. They provide over 20,000 jobs countywide.

Non-profits also employ people with disabilities. The unemployment rate for disabled persons is about 75 percent.

There are training opportunities for the disabled, but there are barriers to finding work (transportation, site barriers, attitude of employers).

Plan for housing near employment centers.

How We Play

Many entertainment and cultural events in the City are provided by non-profits. For example, the Orange Blossom festival is organized by a non-profit.

Link non-profits with cultural events and programs.

How about sharing facilities? Like art galleries with schools.

How We Live

We need affordable, accessible and decent housing in Riverside.

The City's zoning ordinance supports the removal of long-term stay motels that serve as affordable housing in the community. The ordinance only permits an individual to stay at a motel for 6 to 8 weeks. If we are going to close these motels, we need to close the gap by providing low-income housing and transitional housing for those that need it.

Many building and public facilities are not accessible/ADA compliant. Riverside is very inaccessible for those with disabilities, including accessibility to buildings and also getting around Riverside via public transportation

We need a homeless advisory committee.

We desperately need transitional housing in Riverside. People need an opportunity to get on their feet.

We need more Single Room Occupancy (SRO) housing in the City.

We need more low-income housing, including rental and home ownership units.

Provide better case management for homeless or at-risk individuals.

Most social services are located in the Downtown. We need service centers in Arlanza and La Sierra.

We do not have a strong policy for creating affordable housing in the City.

Many of our large homes are been converted into “six packs” – six dwelling units. It would be better to preserve existing homes and avoid problems if we created more affordable rental units.

Many of our existing affordable tax-credit housing projects are about to expire. We need to partner with the Housing Authority, non-profits, the City and businesses to create permanently affordable housing.

The City’s zoning currently inhibits the development of community care facilities that serve the homeless and mentally ill. NIMBYism (not in my backyard) attitudes of the public also is a factor.

We need to create affordable housing that combines services within or in close proximity of large or affordable apartment complexes. An example would be day-care or job training centers.

We need more multi-generational housing. We have a lot of grandparents raising children in the community.

We need social services agencies or at least branch offices in different areas of the City, not just in the Downtown.

Creating conference areas in each of the 26 neighborhoods would be a good first step- then agencies can provide workshops or mobile centers.

We need to spread out affordable housing in the city to avoid over-concentrating housing.

Why annex areas that need services? We have many underutilized/infill parcels in the City that can be used for new facilities. This is easier and cheaper than annexing new areas.

We need to provide a mixture of lower income units with market-rate units in new projects.

Rehabilitation opportunities also provide affordable housing opportunities.

Discrimination due to disability is the number one fair housing complaint in the City.

How We Get Around

We need to fix the existing fixed-route transportation system in Riverside. It is not accessible to many with disabilities, and there are only a few main bus routes.

Many seniors and disabled persons rely heavily on paratransit services because the fixed route system is so poor.

Busses stop running at 10:00 at night; they need to run much later for people to use them.

The RTA has de-funded other paratransit systems. Private companies can also provide a needed service in the community.

We need a trolley system like Santa Monica or Washington D.C.

The Marriot hotels are trying to get into senior housing; there are a lot of private resources available.

We need a fixed-route service that's dependable, accessible, decent, and travels to public facilities.

A special bus route that links social service would be great.

How We Learn

We need to educate the public about affordable housing. There are excellent examples of good quality, successful affordable housing that combines services. Coachella Valley Housing Coalition creates great projects.

We need to enhance internship possibilities with college students.

Provide more workforce training for high school students Many teenagers drop out or move away.

The Riverside Scholars Program is excellent; we need more programs like this.

Keep local kids in Riverside for college.